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A STUDENT GROUP CONCEDES IT TOOK FUNDS FROM C.I.A.

National Association Says
It Received Aid From Early
1950's Until Last Year

ROLE IN SPYING DENIED

Leader Asserts All Money
Was Used to Help Pay for
Overt Activities Abroad

By NEIL SHEEHAN
Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Feb. 13—The National Student Association, the largest college student organization in the country, conceded today that it had received funds from the Central Intelligence Agency from the early nineteen-fifties until last year.

Eugene Groves, president of the association, said the C.I.A. funds had been used to help finance the association's international activities, including sending representatives to student congresses abroad and funding student exchange programs.

The intelligence agency refused tonight to comment on the matter.

The association has chapters on more than 300 American college and university campuses, where about 1.5 million students are studying. The local student government organizations rather than the individual students themselves form the membership of the N.S.A.

Mr. Groves's statement was in response to inquiries about a forthcoming article in the March issue of Ramparts magazine. According to a Ramparts spokesman, the article discussed in detail the relationship between the student association and the C.I.A.

A Ramparts advertisement publicizing the article appeared on page 31 in today's edition of The New York Times.

Foundations Go-Betweens
Mr. Groves said the money was received through foundations that acted as go-betweens for the agency. He declined to name the foundations.

A Ramparts spokesman, Marc Stone, a New York public relations executive, said that the magazine would list the Sydney and Esther Rabb Charitable Foundation of Boston and the Independence Foundation of Boston.

Representatives of the foundations could not be immediately reached for comment.

Mr. Groves, a 1965 Rhodes scholar who has been president of the student association since last September, said he did not know exactly how much the association had received from the C.I.A.

He said, however, that figures given by Mr. Stone—\$200,000 a year a few years ago, with a gradual decrease to about \$50,000 last year—were "a reasonably accurate estimate."

Mr. Groves told of the association's connection with the agency in a telephone interview after a meeting here of the group's officers.

The association decided in the early nineteen-fifties to establish the relationship with the C.I.A., Mr. Groves said, because "at that time it was impossible to obtain funds from private groups" to support the organization's activities abroad.

"The officers of the association felt that the existence of heavily financed and totally controlled Soviet front organizations in the international student field made it imperative that democratic and progressive organizations maintain a presence abroad which would offer an alternative," he said.

The association decided to terminate the relationship, he said, because "in the past two years the officers have believed that conditions have changed so that they do not justify the existence of a covert relationship with Government agencies."

The organization's officers also came to believe, he said, that the relationship was "inconsistent with the democratic, open nature of the N.S.A.," and that "an obligation of trust to the students of the nation and our own personal principles demanded that such a relationship be terminated and that all sources of funding be open."

Mr. Groves said that at no time did the student organization "serve any intelligence function" or provide "informa-

tion of a sensitive nature to any United States Government agency.

The association, throughout the period in which it was receiving C.I.A. funds, frequently took positions at variance with Administration action or official policy at home or overseas, he said.

The association has been generally liberal in both its foreign and domestic policy statements.

The agency's funds were used, Mr. Groves said, for "broad programs of international affairs which worked with other unions of students." Almost all of these activities, he said, took place in "developing countries," particularly those in Africa.

Mr. Groves said he believed that one country involved was Nigeria.

The program, he said, consisted of sending student representatives to conferences, financing student exchange activities, and providing counseling and technical help in seminars abroad or higher education and student leadership.

Funds From Open Sources

Since the association decided to terminate its relationship with the agency, Mr. Groves said, it has been receiving all of its funds, "to the best of my knowledge," either from private or open Government sources.

Among the Government grants for the current year, he said, are funds from the Office of Economic Opportunity to run a tutorial assistance center, money from the Office of Education for a teacher evaluation course and a grant from the State Department to finance college study here for Algerian students.

Mr. Groves said that as far as he knew, no agency funds

were used to finance domestic activities of the association.

The student group, he said, has always tried to avoid the extremes of the political right or left, and to maintain "an integrity as the representative of the highest aspirations of the American student community."

He pointed out that the association was the first student organization to speak out against McCarthyism in the fifties, and that it currently was opposed to apartheid, the policy of racial segregation imposed by South Africa and was in favor of improving relations between East and West.

The association hopes to finance its activities in the future, he said, by a "consortium" of private and open Government funds.

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